MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY

News Release

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ABL Successfully Completes Low-Power Laser Tests Against an Instrumented Boosting Missile Target

The Missile Defense Agency's Airborne Laser (ABL) prototype aircraft successfully acquired, tracked, provided atmospheric compensation and simulated the directed energy kill sequence against an instrumented boosting missile target using three onboard low-power lasers on Aug. 10 at 9:50 p.m. PDT. The missile was launched from San Nicolas Island, located in the Naval Air Warfare Center-Weapons Division Sea Range, off the central California coast.

This marks the third successful ABL missile engagement in just over two months. The ABL previously engaged two sounding rockets with the low-power lasers – this latest test was the first time laser performance data was collected at the target missile. The Missile Alternative Range Target Instrument is similar in size and geometry to a ballistic missile, but with a section of sensors to record and measure the laser performance.

Plans call for ABL to engage progressively more difficult targets in coming months, culminating with a lethal demonstration against a boosting threat-representative ballistic missile target later this year.

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